

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 ROME 01267 01 OF 02 202025Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 /059 W
-----088175 202120Z /65

R 201845Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 058
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USNATO
DIA
SHAPEUSNMR
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY
USDOCOSOUTH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 1267

USDOCOSOUTH FOR INTAF

SHAPEUSNMR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJECT: ITALIAN GOVERNMENT CRISIS -RROUNDUP

SUMMARY: FOLLOWING THE TRADITIONAL ROUND OF POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS,
PRESIDENT LEONE ON JANUARY 19 ASKED, AS EXPECTED, GIULIO ANDREOTTI
TO TRY TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT. ANDREOTTI EXPECTS TO BEGIN
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 ROME 01267 01 OF 02 202025Z

DISCUSSIONS WITH POLITICAL LEADERS OF THE VARIOUS PARTIES ON
JANUARY 23 USING AS THE BASIS OF HIS TALKS THE CONTINATION OF THE
ABSTENTION-GOVERNMENT FORMULA. THE COMMUNISTS (PCI) ARE
KEEPING UP THE POLITICAL PRESSURE BY REPEATING THEIR DEMAND
FOR THE FORMATION OF A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL
EMERGENCY AND BY HINTING THAT THEY MIGHT BE AGREEABLE TO
WORKING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A GOVERNING MAJORITY WITHOUT

THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (DC). THE LAY PARTIES ARE ESSENTIALLY REPEATING THEIR POSITIONS WITH THE SOCIALISTS NEARING THE END OF A CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING AT WHICH IT NOW APPEARS LIKELY THAT THEY WILL DECIDE TO CONVENE A PARTY CONGRESS IN LATE MARCH. END SUMMARY.

1. AS EXPECTED, PRESIDENT LEONE ENDED THREE DAYS OF FORMAL CONSULTA-

TIONS

WITH THE POLITICAL PARTIES ON JANUARY 19 BY ASKING GIULIO ANDREOTTI TO TRY TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT. IN A BRIEF STATEMENT, ANDREOTTI ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HIS TASK WILL BE DIFFICULT BECAUSE OF THE WIDE DIFF-

ERENCES BETWEEN THE PARTIES. HOWEVER, HE BELIEVED HE COULD COUNT ON THE"

SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND COOPERATION" THAT HAD PREVAILED BETWEEN THE PARTIES OVER THE LAST YEAR AND A HALF IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE A SOLUTION" IN WHICH NO (PARTY) WILL LOSE ITS IDENTITY OR HAVE TO RENOUNCE ITS LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES."

2. THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT DIRECTORATE MET ON JANUARY 20 TO PROVIDE ANDREOTTI WITH THE PARTY'S GUIDELINES ON HOW THE CRISIS MAY BE RESOLVED. ANDREOTTI SAID HE WILL USE THE WEEKEND TO PREPARE FOR HIS FIRST FORMAL CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PARTIES ON MONDAY, JANUARY 23. THE CARETAKER PRIME MINISTER IS EXPECTED TO INITIATE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 ROME 01267 01 OF 02 202025Z

DISCUSSIONS ON THE BASIS OF A CONTINUATION OF THE ABSTENTION-GOVERNMENT FORMULA. DURING THE PAST WEEK, DC LEADERS HAVE REITERATED THE PARTY'S OFFICIAL POSITION THAT A SOLUTION SHOULD AND CAN BE FOUND IN UPDATING AND BROADENING LAST JULY' SIX-PARTY PROGRAOACCORD. ACCORDING TO DC SOURCES, SUCH A SOLUTION WOULD ENABLE THE PCI TO VOTE IN FAVOR OF AGREED-UPON POINTS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM (THUS MAKING THE PCI CO-RESPONSIBLE FOR SPECIFIC LEGISLATION), BUT WOULD STOP SHORT OF PCI PARTICIPATION IN THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY.

3. ALTHOUGH THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO BE PROTRACTED, THEY OPEN IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF DECIDED PESSIMISM. WHEREAS MANY OF OUR

SOURCES HAD PREVIOUSLY INDICATED A 50 PERCENT CHANCE OR BETTER THAT A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION WILL BE ACHIEVED, MANY ARE NOW TELLING US THAT THE INCREASING RIGIDITY IN THE POSITIONS OF THE TWO MAJOR PARTIES MAKES RECOURSE TO NEW LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, HOWEVER UNWANTED, MUCH MORE LIKELY. POLITICAL LEADERS ARE SAID TO HAVE BEEN STUNNED BY THE RESULTS OF A PANORAMA MAGAZINE POLL WHICH REVEALED THE DEPTH OF HARDLINE SENTIMENT AMONG DC PARLIAMENTARIANS AGAINST ANY SOLUTION WHICH WOULD BRING THE PCI INTO THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY. OF 205 OUT OF 263 DC DEPUTIES POLLED (MEMBERS OF THE

GOVERNMENT WERE NOT ASKED), ONLY 38 OR 18.5 PER CENT SAID THEY WERE FAVORABLE TO THE PCI IN THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY; 64.5 PER CENT WERE OPPOSED; THE REMAINING 17 PER CENT WERE UNCERTAIN. PANORAMA NOTED THAT THE RESISTANCE TO THE PCI WAS GREATER IN THE NORTH (ALL 16 DC PIEDMONT DEPUTIES INTERVIEWED WERE OPPOSED) WHEREAS THE SMALL GROUP IN FAVOR WERE MOSTLY FROM THE SOUTH.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 ROME 01267 02 OF 02 202044Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
TRSE-00 /059 W

-----088495 202119Z /65

R 201845Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 059
INFO AMEMBSSY BONN
AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USNATO
DIA
SHAPEUSNMR
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY
USDOCOSOUTH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 1267

4. DURING THE PERIOD LEADING UP TO THEIR JANUARY 26 CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING (AT WHICH PARTY SECRETARY BERLINGUER IS EXPECTED TO PRESENT THE OPENING STATEMENT), THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI) WILL
L
CONTINUE TO KEEP UP THE PRESSURE ON THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WITH A VIEW TO WEARING DOWN THEIR OPPOSITION TO COMMUNIST DEMANDS FOR A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY. AT THE SAME TIME, THE COMMUNISTS WILL PURSUE THEIR EFFORTS TO ATTEMPT TO PIN THE BLAME FOR THE CURRENT CRISIS ON ONE OF THE OTHER POLITICAL FORCES.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 ROME 01267 02 OF 02 202044Z

5. THE PAST WEEK HAS SEEN THE PCI REITERATING ITS PROPOSAL FOR A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY TO RESOLVE THE NATION'S PRESSING PROBLEMS. THE PARTY OFFICIALLY RESTATED THIS POSITION TWICE DURING THE WEEK, ONCE IN A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED JANUARY 17, AT THE CONCLUSION OF A MEETING OF REGIONAL SECRETARIES OF THE PARTY AND A SECOND TIME IN A STATEMENT READ BY PARTY SECRETARY BERLINGUER ON JANUARY 18 AS HE EXITED FROM THE QUIRINALE FOLLOWING CONSULTATIONS WITH ITALIAN PRESIDENT LEONE.

6. THE PCI DID CAUSE A MAJOR STIR DURING THE WEEK WHEN, IN THE COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE MEETING OF REGIONAL SECRETARIES, THE COMMUNISTS HINTED THAT IN THE ABSENCE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF FORMING A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY, THEY WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER THE FORMATION OF A MAJORITY GOVERNMENT (COMMUNISTS, SOCIALISTS, SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS) WITHOUT THE DC. THE PCI PRESS SECTION FOLLOWED UP ON THE COMMUNIQUE WITH THE RELEASE OF STATISTICS INDICATING THAT THE FOUR ABOVE-MENTIONED PARTIES HAD GARNERED JUST OVER 50 PER CENT OF THE VOTES IN LAST YEAR'S NATIONAL ELECTIONS. BERLINGUER, IN HIS PREPARED STATEMENT A DAY LATER, ATTEMPTED TO PLAY DOWN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PREVIOUS DAY'S STATEMENT, BUT HE NEVERTHELESS REMINDED EVERYONE THAT "IN THE PRESENT PARLIAMENT THERE EXIST DIVERSE POSSIBILITIES TO AN OUTCOME (EARLY ELECTIONS) THAT ALL THE POLITICAL FORCES CONSIDER GRAVE AND NEGATIVE."

COMMENT: AT THIS POINT WE DO NOT SEE THE PCI HINT ABOUT A POSSIBLE MAJORITY WITHOUT THE DC AS ANYTHING MORE THAN A TACTICAL MANEUVER DESIGNED TO INCREASE THE PRESSURE ON THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS

TO MAKE SOME CONCESSIONS TO THE LEFT. AT THE VERY LEAST, THE IDEA WOULD SEEMINGLY HAVE LITTLE CHANCE OF SUCCEEDING SINCE THE REPUBLICANS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS IMMEDIATELY REJECTED IT, PERHAPS CONTRIBUTING TO BERLINGUER'S EFFORTS TO DEFLECT ATTENTION FROM THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 ROME 01267 02 OF 02 202044Z

PROPOSAL. FURTHERMORE, FOR THE PCI TO MOVE FORMALLY TO SUCH A POSITION WOULD MEAN A NEGATION OF THE CURRENT LINE OF THE PARTY. FOR THE MOMENT, WE WOULD EXPECT THE PCI TO CONTINUE ITS CALL FOR A GOVERN-

MENT OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY, AND DO NOT EXPECT IT TO PLAY ANY MORE OF ITS

CARDS UNTIL IT RECEIVES NEW SIGNALS FROM THE DC. NEVERTHELESS,
THE RECENT PCI STATEMENTS REFLECT THE DEPTH OF THE
DILEMMA IN WHICH THE PARTY FINDS ITSELF AT THIS DIFFICULT CROSSROAD,
AND IT CANNOT BE TOTALLY RULED OUT THAT THE PARTY WOULD EMBARK
ON A NEW STRATEGIC COURSE IF CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRED.
END COMMENT.

7. AMONG THE SOCIALISTS AND LAY PARTIES, THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPEMENT OF THE WEEK IS THE ON-GOING PSI CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING WHICH BEGAN ON JANUARY 19. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, IT APPEARS THAT CRAXI AND SIGNORILE MAY HAVE MARSHALLED SUFFICIENT VOTES TO BEAT BACK AN ATTEMPT BY MANCA AND MANCINI TO POSTPONE THE PSI'S MARCH CONGRESS. SINCE CRAXI IS EXPECTED TO BENEFIT AT THE CONGRESS FROM STRONG LOCAL LEVEL SUPPORT, HOLDING THE CONGRESS ON SCHEDULED IS REGARDED AS HIGHLY IMPORTANT FOR CRAXI'S SURVIVAL AS PARTY SECRETARY. THE PSI CC MEETING MAY ALSO CLARIFY THE SOCIALIST ATTITUDE ON THE CRISIS. SO FAR, THEY CONTINUE TO PROFESS SUPPORT FOR AN EMERGENCY GOVERNMENT. AT THE SAME TIME, PSI LEADERS HAVE BEEN OUTSPOKEN ON THE NEED TO AVOID NEW ELECTIONS (CRAXI CALLED THEM "WORSE THAN CHOLERA"). THE REPUBLICANS HAVE INDICATED THAT ANYTHING THAT BRINGS THE PCI FURTHER IN THE GOVERNING PROCESS WILL BE SALUTARY BUT STRESS THAT THE KEY TO RESOLUTION OF THE CRISIS IS AGREEMENT ON AN EFFECTIVE ECONOMIC PROGRAM. THE LIBERALS SUPPORT THE DC'S LINE; THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AGREE THAT THE PCI SHOULD NOT ENTER THE GOVERNMENT, BUT DIFFER IN THEIR WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT A FORMULA IN WHICH THE PCI WOULD

JOIN THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY. GARDNER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 ROME 01267 02 OF 02 202044Z

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESIDENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ROME01267
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780031-0598
Format: TEL
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780140/aaaabhfl.tel
Line Count: 258
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e01bc7e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3740270
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ITALIAN GOVERNMENT CRISIS -RROUNDUP SUMMARY: FOLLOWING THE TRADITIONAL ROUND OF POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS, PRESIDENT LEONE ON JANUARY 19 ASKED, AS EXP ECTED
TAGS: PINT, IT
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e01bc7e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014